Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior listings, and versions, of claims in the present application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A method of preventing reduction of sales amount of records due to a digital music file illegally distributed through a communication network, comprising:

a) collecting an illegally produced digital music file according to a kind of music of the digital music file, which is derived from a record of a cooperating record corporation, by searching the network;

b) encrypting the collected digital music file with a predetermined key; and

c) redistributing the encrypted digital music file through the network.

2. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein at step a) and c) the collection and redistribution of the digital music file are performed by using a popular digital file sharing program.

3. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein at step a) and c) the collection and redistribution of the digital music file are performed by using a popular digital file sharing server.

4. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein at step b) the collected digital music file is encrypted by a public key encryption algorithm.

5. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 2, wherein at step b) the collected digital music file is encrypted by a public key encryption algorithm.

6. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 3, wherein at step b) the collected digital music file is encrypted by a public key encryption algorithm.

7. (Previously Presented) A method of preventing reduction of sales amount of records due to a digital music file illegally distributed through a communication network, comprising:

a) collecting an illegally produced digital music file according to a kind of music of the digital music file, which is derived from a record of a cooperating record corporation, by searching the network;

b) inserting a watermark containing a predetermined secret information in the collected digital music file; and

c) redistributing the watermarked digital music file through the network.

8. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 7, wherein at step a) and c) the collection and redistribution of the digital music file are performed by using a popular digital file sharing program.

9. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 7, wherein at step a) and c) the collection and redistribution of the digital music file are performed by using a popular digital file sharing server.

10. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein collecting the illegally produced digital music file comprises selecting one of a plurality of digital music files having a same name, size and playing time.

11. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 7, wherein collecting the illegally produced digital music file comprises selecting one of a plurality of digital music files having a same name, size and playing time.

12. (Previously Presented) A method of preventing reduction of sales amount of records due to a digital music file illegally distributed through a communication network, comprising:

searching a network for an illegally produced digital music file, which is derived from a record of a cooperating record corporation;

identifying a plurality of digital music files that are substantially similar to the illegally produced digital music file;

collecting one of the plurality of digital music files that has a greatest number of files having the same name, size and playing time;

modifying the collected digital music file; and

redistributing the modified digital music file through the network.

13. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 12, wherein searching the network for the illegally produced digital music file comprises searching the network according to a kind of music of the digital music file.

14. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 12, wherein the collecting and redistributing are performed by using a popular digital file sharing server.

15. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 12, wherein modifying the collected digital music file comprises encrypting the collected digital music file with a predetermined key.

16. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 15, wherein encrypting the collected digital music file comprises encrypting with a public key encryption algorithm.

17. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 3, wherein modifying the collected digital music file comprises inserting a watermark containing a predetermined secret information in the collected digital music file.

18. (New) The method as set forth in claim 12, wherein modifying the collected digital music file comprises altering original content of the collected digital music file.